

MONEY BELONGING TO THE SISSETON AND WAHPETON  
INDIANS.

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L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING,

IN RESPONSE TO RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE OF JANUARY 7,  
1901, COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE ON THE SUBJECT OF PAY-  
MENT OF MONEY BELONGING TO THE SISSETON AND WAH-  
PETON INDIANS.

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JANUARY 15, 1901.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be  
printed.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, January 14, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to be in receipt of the following Senate reso-  
lution of the 7th instant:

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Interior be, and is hereby, directed to send to the Senate a copy of all recommendations, requests, and papers on file in relation to the payment of money belonging to the Sisseton and Wahpeton Indians to said Indians since November sixth, nineteen hundred, and to inform the Senate whether any official assurances were made to said Indians, or any of them, or any other person, previous to November sixth, that he would make said payment after that date.

In reply I beg to say that no recommendation, request, or paper in relation to the payment of any of said moneys has been filed in this Department since November 6, 1900.

Copies of correspondence on the subject of a payment to the said Indians from their funds, preceding the date last named, are herewith transmitted for the information of the Senate, as follows:

Letter from Hon. R. F. Pettigrew of March 8, 1900, recommending a payment to them of \$250,000.

Letter from Hon. Charles H. Burke of April 10, 1900, recommending the same payment, "or so much of the sum stated as it may appear they can use at this time to an advantage."

Letter of April 10, 1900, from Hon. Robert J. Gamble, recommending the said payment, "or such sum as \* \* \* would seem wise."

Letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated April 13,

1900, submitting reasons why such payments, in his judgment, should not be made.

Letter of April 16, 1900, from the Department to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, concurring in his recommendation and declining to permit the payment to be made.

Telegram of October 26, 1900, from Hon. Charles H. Burke, requesting payment of \$150,000 to said Indians.

Telegram of October 29, 1900, from the Department to Hon. Charles H. Burke stating that his telegram indicated that the Indians had moderated their demands, but that no petition from them had been received, and if such was their desire, and petition to that effect be presented, payment would be promptly ordered.

Telegram from Sisseton and Wahpeton Indians, dated October 29, 1900, asking the per capita payment of \$150,000 out of principal of tribal fund.

Letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated October 30, 1900, recommending payment of the above-named sum as requested by the Indians.

Letter from the Department to the President of October 30, 1900, recommending his approval of the payment of the sum named to the Indians.

The matter is now before the President awaiting his action.

Very respectfully,

E. A. HITCHCOCK,  
*Secretary.*

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND SALE OF MEAT PRODUCTS,  
UNITED STATES SENATE,  
*Washington, D. C., March 8, 1900.*

DEAR SIR: Mr. Charles Crawford is the most prominent and capable man among the Sisseton and Wahpeton Indians of South Dakota, and is a man of character, his statements can be relied upon.

These people want a payment of \$250,000 out of their funds to be distributed in cash.

I recommend the payment. I am sure the money will do them more good now than at any other time.

Very respectfully, yours,

R. F. PETTIGREW.

HON. E. A. HITCHCOCK,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Washington, D. C., April 10, 1900.*

SIR: I would respectfully state that I have received letters from a large number of the Indians at Sisseton Agency, S. Dak., requesting me to favor the payment of \$250,000 of the funds belonging to them and held by the Government in trust for their benefit. It is claimed that a large number of these Indians are old and unable to work and support themselves, and that they are in need of the above amount, and I would therefore respectfully recommend paying them in accordance with their petition now on file in your Department, or such portion of the sum stated as it may appear they can use at this time to an advantage.

I would also recommend that the payments due said Indians annually be paid to them earlier in the fall than has been the practice heretofore, and that some means be devised so that the payment can all be made within a short time. This is a subject with which I have conversed with you personally, and I certainly hope something

can be done to cause payments in the future to be made more promptly; also that you will recommend the payment of such portion of their principal fund as they desire, as before stated.

Respectfully,

CHAS. H. BURKE.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Washington, D. C., April 10, 1900.*

DEAR SIR: I understand that a petition has been filed in your department by quite a number of the Sisseton Indians, requesting that a payment of \$250,000 be made to them out of the trust funds held by the Government. It is represented that these funds could be wisely and well used by the Indians at this time, and that it would be much to their advantage. I am anxious to concur in what would seem to be for the best interests of the tribe, and would recommend that the statements and petition on file receive your careful consideration, and I would recommend that the above sum, or such sum as in the judgment of yourself and the honorable Secretary would seem wise, be paid to them at as early a date as could conveniently be made.

Yours, truly,

ROBERT J. GAMBLE.

Hon. W. A. JONES,  
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, April 13, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a letter from Nathan P. Johnson, at the Sisseton Agency, S. Dak., dated February 21 last, transmitting a petition of the Sisseton and Wahpeton Indians for a payment of \$250,000 from the trust funds held to their credit in the United States Treasury, and requesting that the delegates elected be allowed to go to Washington for the purpose of conferring with this office in regard to their petition and other matters of great interest to the Indians.

There are letters here from Senator Pettigrew and Hon. Messrs. Burke and Gamble, of South Dakota, recommending the payment.

In connection therewith I have to state that—

By act approved March 3, 1891, there was appropriated for the said Indians to pay for lands in the Lake Traverse Reservation, ceded by the agreement of December 12, 1899, to be placed to the credit of the Indians in the United States Treasury, at 5 per cent per annum ..... \$1,699,800.00

There has been deducted from said sum the following item, viz:

By Executive order of January 19, 1895, for per capita payment.....	\$199,800.00
Amount refunded to the United States on account of excessive appropriation for lands ceded.....	177,635.85
Amount paid to John B. Sanborn as attorney's fee.....	41,706.21
By Executive orders in 1898, paid per capita.....	150,000.00
By Executive orders in 1899, paid per capita.....	100,000.00
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	669,142.06

Leaving a diminished principal of ..... 1,030,657.94

From the foregoing it will be seen that within the last five years these Indians have been paid per capita from the *principal* of their fund in the Treasury a total of \$449,800, or over \$240 for each man, woman, and child. This is in addition to the payment of their interest and treaty fund annually, which is about \$30 per capita. Some of the Department inspectors have reported that the result of these large payments is demoralizing in the extreme, and this is the consensus of opinion of other disinterested persons who have given the subject careful consideration.

The fund in the Treasury is the only fund the said Indians are depending upon for

assistance, the interest on which is expended for education and cash payments annually, and if the said fund is diminished by continual per capita payments the date is not far distant when they will become a charge upon the Government. Under the circumstances, therefore, I respectfully recommend that the request of these Indians be *not* granted.

Very respectfully,

W. A. JONES, *Commissioner*.

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
Washington, April 16, 1900.

SIR: I am in receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, transmitting a letter from Agent Johnson, of the Sisseton Agency, S. Dak., of the 21st of February last, inclosing a petition of the Sisseton and Wahpeton Indians, requesting that the sum of \$250,000 from the trust fund to their credit in the Treasury be paid to them, and that the delegation elected be allowed to come to this city for the purpose of conferring with the Department in regard to this petition and other matters of great interest to them. You state that there are letters on file in your office from Senator Pettigrew and the Hon. Messrs. Burke and Gamble, of South Dakota, recommending the payment.

From the statement submitted by you in your letter of the 13th instant, it appears that under the agreement with these Indians of December 12, 1889, approved by the act of Congress of March 3, 1891, there was placed to their credit in the United States Treasury, to bear interest at 5 per cent per annum, the sum of \$1,699,800, of which the sum of \$177,655.85 was refunded to the United States on account of excess of appropriation for the land ceded; \$41,706.21 was paid John B. Sanborn as attorney fees, and \$449,800 paid to these Indians per capita since January 19, 1895, or over \$240 for each man, woman, and child. In addition to these payments from the principal of their fund they have received a per capita of about \$30 annually from interest and treaty funds, and you give it as your opinion, supported by the reports of inspectors and other disinterested persons who have given the subject careful consideration, that the result of these large payments is demoralizing in the extreme. You add that the balance of the above-mentioned fund, amounting to \$1,030,657.94, is the only fund these Indians are depending upon for assistance, the interest on which is annually expended for educational purposes and cash payments, and if this fund is diminished by frequent per capita payments, the Indians will become a charge upon the Government in a very short time, and you therefore recommend that this request for the payment to them of \$250,000 from the principal to their credit in the Treasury be not granted.

The Department has given careful consideration to the petition of the Indians and your recommendation in the premises. In view of the fact that large per capita payments, amounting to \$449,800, have been made to these Indians since 1895, \$100,000 thereof having been paid to them only about a year ago, and of the necessity existing to keep the balance of the principal intact, in order that the annual interest may be used for their support and education, your recommendation to deny the additional payment of \$250,000 from their principal now in the Treasury is approved, and you will so inform the Indian agent of the Sisseton Agency, S. Dak.

The inclosures to your letter of the 13th instant are herewith returned.

Very respectfully,

E. A. HITCHCOCK, *Secretary*.

The COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

[Telegram.]

MILLBANK, S. DAK., October 26, 1900.

Hon. W. A. JONES,  
*Commissioner Indian Affairs:*

Has anything been done toward ordering payment \$150,000 for Sisseton Indians? Senator Hanna recently recommended it. Answer.

CHAS. H. BURKE.

[Telegram.]

OCTOBER 29, 1900.

HON. CHARLES H. BURKE,  
*Pierre, S. Dak.:*

Payment asked by Sissetons last spring was deemed excessive and request refused, but your telegram of 26th indicates that the Indians now desire smaller and more reasonable amount, namely, \$150,000. I find no petition or request on file from them to this effect, but if that is now their desire, and petition from them to that effect is presented, payment of that sum will be promptly ordered.

E. A. HITCHCOCK,  
*Secretary.*

[Telegram.]

SISSETON, S. DAK., *October 29, 1900.*

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, D. C.:*

We, the following, as representatives of the Sisseton and Wahpeton tribe of Sioux Indians, of South Dakota, respectfully request that we be paid the sum of \$150,000 immediately out of the funds to our credit in the United States Treasury.

CHAS. R. CRAWFORD.  
 SOLOMON TWOSTARS.  
 THOS. ROBERTSON.  
 SAM LITTLE THUNDER.  
 GRAYFOOT SAM.  
 L. J. BROWN.  
 THOS. QUAINN.  
 LOUIS LABELLE.  
 JOHN NAHOLEN.  
 LOT OLO.  
 JANJAN.  
 D. J. ROBERTS.  
 JOHN TASINTO.  
 TITUS JUGG.  
 JOHN WILLIAMS.

Approved by

NATHAN P. JOHNSON,  
*United States Indian Agent.*

[Indorsement.]

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*October 30, 1900.*

Respectfully referred to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for immediate report and recommendation.

E. A. HITCHCOCK,  
*Secretary.*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, October 30, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a telegram from Sisseton Indians of the 29th instant, referred to this office on this date for immediate report and recommendation.

The telegram is as follows:

"We, the following, as representatives of the Sisseton and Wahpeton tribe of Sioux Indians of South Dakota, respectfully request that we be paid the sum of \$150,000 immediately out of the funds to our credit in the United States Treasury.

"Chas. R. Crawford, Solomon Twostars, Thos. Roberts, Sam Little Thunder, Grayfoot Sam, L. J. Brown, Thos. Quainn, Louis Labelle, John Moholen, Lot Olo, Janjan, D. J. Roberts, John Tasinto, Titus Jugg, John Williams. Approved by Nathan P. Johnson, United States Indian Agent."

In reply I have the honor to report that there is now in the Treasury to the credit of the Sisseton and Wahpeton Indians \$1,033,713.34, drawing interest at 5 per cent. The act of March 3, 1891, ratifying the agreement with these Indians, provides that

the principal and interest of their fund shall be at all times subject to appropriation by Congress, or on application by order of the President, for the education and civilization of said band of Indians or members thereof. (26 Stats., 1039.)

I therefore respectfully recommend that the authority of the President be obtained for the immediate payment per capita to the Sisseton and Wahpeton Indians of the \$150,000 requested.

The telegram of the 29th instant is herewith inclosed.

Very respectfully,

W. A. JONES,  
*Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, October 30, 1900.*

The PRESIDENT:

It has been represented to me that the Sisseton and Wahpeton Indians, in South Dakota, are greatly in need of funds to meet pressing needs during the coming winter, and to enable them to pay debts contracted for supplies of various kinds.

Application was made early in the present year for the payment to them of \$250,000 out of their trust fund in the Treasury, but the sum seemed so excessive and the reason therefor being deemed insufficient, I declined to recommend the matter for your consideration.

They now ask for the payment of \$150,000, and in view of their apparent needs I have the honor to recommend your approval of the payment to them, per capita, of that sum, from the principal of their trust fund, under the provisions of the act of March 3, 1891, which leaves that fund subject to appropriation by Congress, or to application by order of the President, for their education and civilization.

I inclose for your information a copy of a letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, of even date, recommending the said payment.

Very respectfully,

E. A. HITCHCOCK, *Secretary.*

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